

U.S. role exposed

Masses resist Sudan coup

By Sara Flounders

The Oct. 25 military coup in Sudan, led by General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, has been met by a heroic outpouring of coordinated people's resistance.

U.S. imperialism is intensely involved

behind the scenes in an effort to sabotage the revolutionary struggle arising in this strategic African country. The U.S. can draw on its vast financial leverage, global military reach, intelligence agencies, capitalist media and a web of NGOs and other well-funded organizations.

Sudan is a country rich in oil, natural gas, gold and other resources. It is also located on the Red Sea, on global shipping lanes. Historically it has been targeted by various destabilizing strategies, including attempts to break the unified country into smaller, competing regions.

Coup leader Burhan has declared himself head of the Sovereign Council, a power-sharing body of military officers and civilians, which has been ruling Sudan since late 2019. Prime Minister Abdullah Hamdok, head of the moderate civilian faction of that transitional government, has been arrested, along with most civilian cabinet members and other leaders.



Sudanese coup protest in the capital, Khartoum, Oct. 25.

In an effort to break this coordination the military has shut all internet communication. (tinyurl.com/tkzea8c)

Sudan's 2018 uprising

The military coup and mass popular resistance is the most recent phase in an unfolding revolutionary process in Sudan, which began with a December 2018 popular uprising.

This upheaval protested economic shortages, spiraling food prices and hyperinflation, created by years of U.S. sanctions and competing separatist movements. The 2018 uprising involved millions of Sudanese workers, peasant farmers and herders, youth and oppressed nationalities. The mobilization also pulled in U.S.-funded organizations,

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Protect safe, legal abortion!

By Kathy Durkin

Demonstrators outside the U.S. Supreme Court Nov. 1 demanded an end to the near-total ban on abortions in Texas. Inside, arguments were made in two separate lawsuits challenging S.B. 8, the brutal Texas law — one brought by Whole Woman's Health, a reproductive health care provider in Texas, the other by the U.S. Department of Justice.

Those rallying called for protection of the right to safe, legal abortions now under attack in many states. SCOTUS legalized this fundamental human right

in 1973 in the Roe v. Wade case, in response to a mass struggle.. However, the state of Mississippi has filed the Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization case with SCOTUS, asking the high court to overturn the Roe decision — making abortions illegal again. This case will be argued Dec. 1.

All progressive forces should join the protests outside SCOTUS called for Dec. 1. This is a crucial action. Between now and then and beyond, local actions should be organized. It is time to mobilize! March! Rally! Resist! Boycott! Sit-in! □



Nov. 1, Washington, D.C.


PHOTO: CENTER FOR REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

Widespread resistance to coup

The Sudanese Communist Party (SCP) and its allied trade unions, neighborhood resistance committees and the Sudanese Professional Association (SPA is an organization of teachers, medical workers and civil service workers) have issued a call to take to the streets.

The basic unifying demand is for the return to civilian government. The tactics are civil disobedience, a general strike and other coordinated mass actions. All schools, industries (including the national airline) and civil services are part of the strike call.

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Diplomat Alex Saab tortured

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Oscar López Rivera, Puerto Rican freedom fighter and former political prisoner, testifies Oct. 23.

WW PHOTO: MONICA MOOREHEAD

Mother’s five-year struggle wins a victory Cops indicted in Jamarion Robinson’s death

By Dianne Mathiowetz
Atlanta

Monteria Robinson’s life changed Aug. 5, 2016. That day a 16-person police force from multiple agencies under the direction of the U.S. Marshals Service fired 110 rounds into the apartment of her son’s, Jamarion Robinson’s, partner in an attempt to serve a warrant on the 26-year-old Black man.

At the time, federal agents were not allowed to wear body cameras nor were local police from Atlanta and East Point, Ga., and Fulton, Fayette and Clayton Counties, who participated in the assault. However, a neighbor started filming once the gunfire began and recorded almost three minutes of continuous police shooting.

After the cops killed him, Robinson, with 76 bullet wounds, was handcuffed and dragged down the stairs to the ground-floor living room, where a flash bang grenade was set off, burning him.

Police claimed that Robinson fired at them first, but the only gun that was found in the apartment was inoperable, and Robinson’s fingerprints were not on it. Of the multiple bullet wounds on his body, there were massive entry injuries on the palms of his hands, indicating his hands were up when he was shot.

Much of this information only came to light because of the independent investigation Monteria Robinson launched into the murder of her son. At the time the Marshals Service refused to permit their agents to be questioned or allow any documents to be turned over to the Fulton County district attorney.

However, after years of rallies, protests, press



PHOTO: JUSTICE FOR GEORGIA
Jamarion Robinson’s mother, Monteria Robinson

conferences, media interviews and civil lawsuits that kept the case in the public eye, the current Fulton County District Attorney, Fani Willis, convened a grand jury Oct. 27 and 28. At the conclusion of testimony, two officers, Eric A. Heinze with the Marshals Service and Kristopher L. Hutchens, a Clayton County police officer assigned to the Marshals Service were indicted. The eight counts include felony murder, aggravated assault, burglary, making false statements and violation of oath by a public officer.

Monteria Robinson delivered the news to a group of dedicated supporters who had rallied for hours both days in front of the Fulton County Courthouse, chanting her son’s name, distributing flyers and repeating the details of his death while the grand jury met.

While the indictments brought shouts of joy and tears of relief that some measure of justice had been won, Jamarion Robinson’s mother made clear this was just a first step. Only two members of the “death squad” were charged, and there is a trial and possible conviction yet to take place. Beyond that, she noted, are the many other families whose members have died in equally suspicious police killings in metro Atlanta and around the country.

As of this writing, the two indicted officers have not turned themselves in. They were granted seven days to get their affairs in order, and their bond has already been determined. Both have retained high-priced lawyers, who have already submitted a motion to move the case to federal court where they will argue that as federal agents, Heine and Hutchins are immune from state prosecution.

For additional info, see JusticeforJamarion.org. □

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Supply chain crisis: Driven by deregulation

By Betsey Piette

Corporate media and the Biden administration have focused on major West Coast ports, specifically Los Angeles and Long Beach, Calif., as the pivot points in the global supply chain crisis impacting the U.S. But the problem is far more complex. It involves points of production, methods of global transport, points of entry to the U.S., plus how goods are transported once they are unloaded at these ports.

While increasingly in the news today, the supply chain crisis is not a new phenomenon. Since the early 1970s, developments in high technology have meant that most goods consumed in the U.S. are produced abroad and imported here. The problem, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, is how these products get transported to U.S. consumers, who are increasingly seeing empty shelves at every turn.

Whether goods are made in the U.S. or produced abroad and shipped to U.S. ports, every product, on every shelf in every big-box store or in every box left on your doorstep, was delivered there on some type of truck. Truck drivers are responsible for moving 72% of all the goods we consume.

The shortage of drivers due to low wages and poor working conditions is a key factor in the supply chain crisis.

While focusing attention on the ports, corporate media and politicians like President Joe Biden say little about the trucking industry. However, in an interview with KCRW News Oct. 19, Danny Miranda, president of International Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 94, stated that Biden's proposal to open the ports 24/7 to get supplies moving won't solve the problem. "We've become a storage facility instead of a throughput facility. ... We are inundated with cargo and moving it as fast as we can."

If there is no one to pick them up, storage containers sit in the ports, Miranda explained. "They're stacked; they sit. It's cheaper for them to sit [on] that ship out in the middle of the harbor than it is to put it on the dock, because there's no one to come and get it." (tinyurl.com/36d72ane)

The roadblock Miranda is referring to is the shortage of port truck drivers to collect cargo from giant shipping containers at the docks. Most of these drivers are non-union and experience some of the lowest pay and worst working conditions in the industry, because government deregulation has allowed them to be classified as "independent contractors" — stripping them of protections under existing government labor regulations.

Deregulation nightmare

In 1935, the Interstate Commerce Commission's Motor Carrier Act was created to regulate the interstate trucking industry. It set trucking rates; the number of carriers, areas and routes served; what commodities could be carried; and who could be a carrier.

This act of Congress followed the tumultuous and bloody four-month strike of thousands of Minneapolis truck drivers led by Teamsters Local 574 from May to August 1934. It was a pivotal moment for the Teamsters union as it helped lead to the 1935 enactment of the Fair Labor Standards Act and the National Labor

Relations Act (NLRA), which governs labor relations in all industries except railroads and airlines.

Many blame Republican President Ronald Reagan for weakening the U.S. labor movement when he broke the Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization strike in 1981. But the damage had already started when Democratic President Jimmy Carter signed the Motor Carrier Act of 1980, which overturned the 1935 MCA, deregulating the trucking industry and opening the door to today's network of big-box stores and online shopping.

Under the 1980 MCA, anyone could haul any goods to any place for any price they liked, while forcing truckers to compete with one another on the price of transportation. While Carter's MCA slashed the cost of moving goods by truck, its impact on union truck drivers was devastating.

Drive to the bottom

Deregulation drove down the cost of shipping goods, but neither consumers nor drivers benefited. Any cost savings went directly to the coffers of shipping company owners at the top of this \$800 billion industry. The price for trucking got cheaper, but the ability for truck drivers to make a decent living evaporated.

From 1980 to today, median trucking wages sank anywhere from 24% to 50%, depending on the type of truck and where it was driven. Local truck drivers were largely replaced by long-haulers driving 53-foot-long trailers. The majority of non-union truck drivers on these big trucks are headed to a big-box retailer.

It was the large retail chains like Walmart, Home Depot and Amazon that benefited the most from the 1980 MCA. Deregulation fueled the development of the big-box store system, and later e-commerce, by removing restrictions on how goods could be shipped. Labor costs are so low that companies can now send whatever they want by any route. Trucks now carry huge amounts of goods from ports directly to distribution centers or retail stores. Mom-and-pop stores suffered, but Amazon Prime flourished.

Unions bore the brunt of deregulations

Union membership has plummeted, faced with competition from low-wage nonunion carriers. Forty years ago, the Teamsters had over 2 million members, representing the majority of truck drivers. Today they represent around 2% of truck

drivers — around 70,000 workers. UPS was the only significant trucking company to unionize since deregulations began.

A provision of Biden's infrastructure bill awaiting Congressional action would allow the training of 3,000 additional drivers — ages 18-20 — to drive tractor-trailers across state lines. But this provision would only further increase competition within the trucking industry, where currently drivers must be 21. The problem is not a shortage of drivers; it is the erosion of wages, benefits and job safety resulting from deregulation.

How serious is the problem? According

Long-haul truckers have had an annual turnover rate of over 90% for decades [according to the American Trucking Association], and conditions for entry-level jobs are terrible. Long-haul drivers, who often work 60 to 70 hours per week, are paid not by the hour but for the miles they drive.

to NPR's Planet Money, long-haul truckers have had an annual turnover rate of over 90% for decades [according to the American Trucking Association], and conditions for entry-level jobs are terrible. Long-haul drivers, who often work 60 to 70 hours per week, are paid not by the hour but for the miles they drive. The average pay is 52.3 cents per mile, and drivers are not compensated for the time it takes to load or unload their trucks, increasing tensions between drivers and warehouse workers. (tinyurl.com/f3xa2hb5)

Union shops mandate that drivers be paid while they are waiting for loading.

Many drivers have to cover the cost of maintenance, insurance and fuel for their trucks. With all these added costs, their earnings amount to less than the federal hourly minimum wage of \$7.25. Many drivers end up in the red, because they lease trucks from major trucking companies. Over 40% of truck drivers are people of color; 10% are women.

Truck driving is considered one of the most dangerous jobs in the U.S. With incomes based on the miles driven, long-haul drivers can average up to 125,000 miles per year, forgoing sleep to cover the

distance. Excessive fatigue is the leading cause of trucking accidents. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 892 long-haul drivers or their passengers died in 2019.

Control over the 'last mile'

To better understand the crisis centered around ports of entry in California, you need to look at the companies responsible for the "last mile" of transport between ports and retail markets. A major player is Greenwich, Conn., based XPO Logistics involved with port, freight and warehouse workers. They link together the transportation of goods from ships to stores.

XPO's former chief executive Louis DeJoy is currently U.S. Postmaster General.

He's the same DeJoy postal workers say is destroying the U.S. Postal Service while seeking to privatize it.

By misclassifying its workers as "independent contractors," XPO provides services to some of the world's largest corporations including IKEA, Home Depot, Target, Verizon, Starbucks, Nike and others and has stripped tens of millions of workers globally of their rights and benefits. They further deny them the right to unionize under the provisions of the NLRA, which does not recognize contractors as workers.

XPO workers in Europe are facing similar problems. In France, where drivers are unionized, XPO reneged on its promise not to slash jobs for at least 18 months after purchasing a competitor. Similar struggles with XPO are happening in Britain, Spain, Belgium and the Netherlands.

Teamsters General President Jim Hoffa addressed the problem of companies like XPO while in Washington, D.C., to meet with Biden Oct. 13. Hoffa stated: "One of the major problems with the current state of logistics is the shortage of port truck drivers. They are not paid a living wage and are largely treated as indentured servants. And that will continue until this country deals with the issue of misclassification, which allows them to be subjugated by companies."

"If people can make an adequate wage with good working conditions, they will come to work. But that means they must be treated as employees, who are allowed to organize with a union so they can negotiate proper compensation, benefits and workplace safety. Nothing will change until that happens." (facebook.com/teamsters)

In June 2020, long before corporate media appeared to notice supply chain problems, Teamsters locals in 30 cities protested to demand state governments and employers provide enhanced safety measures for workers in the country's food supply chain. Their demands included paid sick and family leave, hazard pay, access to PPE and testing capacity. Over 5,000 food supply chain workers had tested positive for COVID, and more than 20 have died from the virus.

Just imagine the impact if all 3.5 million truck drivers in the U.S. not only followed the Teamsters' example by protesting but withheld their labor to win their demands. For that to happen nonunion drivers have to organize. □



Teamster members protest working conditions outside the UNFI warehouse in Denver, Colo., June 10, 2020.

On the picket line

WHEN WE FIGHT WE WIN!

By Marie Kelly

Food and beverage industries workers

Kellogg’s workers continue their strike at plants in Battle Creek, Mich.; Lancaster, Pa.; Omaha, Neb.; and Memphis, Tenn. They are members of the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers Union, and their demands center around the unfair two-tier wage system and cuts to benefits.

The majority of workers at the Battle Creek plant are registered Republicans. Union leaders have brought to light how local Republican lawmakers take major contributions from the Kellogg’s corporation and benefit financially in other business dealings with them. These same lawmakers have been silent on the issues facing their striking constituents. This is indicative of the state’s allegiance in the struggle between the capitalists and the working class. The power and money of the ruling class is what drives politicians, not what is best for the masses.

Heaven Hill Distillery workers in Kentucky, members of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 23D, have ended their strike after winning major concessions in a five-year contract. The strike began in early September. Among the gains, the new contract will maintain overtime language, increase company contributions to employees’ health care plan and increase wages by as much as \$3.09 per hour.

Educators

Faculty at the University of Pittsburgh will unionize with the United Steelworkers after a landslide election win. This will include 3,000 full-time, tenured, and part-time educators. Organizers said the pandemic and the need to have more involvement in decision-making at the five Pitt campuses really pushed the victory this time;

there were two failed attempts in 1991 and 1996.

The staff at Pitt have launched a unionization drive, also with USW. They include thousands of university workers — academic advisers, lab managers, research coordinators and others. Graduate students failed to win a union by a narrow margin in 2019, but the Pennsylvania Labor Relations Board cited the university for Unfair Labor Practices. It was revealed that the university has paid \$2 million to an anti-union law firm since 2019.

The Harvard Graduate Student Union, HGSU-UAW, a union of more than 4,000 students who work on campus, held a three-day strike Oct. 27-29 because Harvard has refused to bargain in good faith. HGSU is made up of teaching assistants, tutors and research assistants.

Key issues are adequate pay for grad students, many of whom have families and cannot live on the wages they are paid, and dental insurance. But the big demand they have been pushing since the founding of their union four years ago has been opposition to racist discrimination, sexism and sexual harassment. Management refuses to give them the same contract language that the UNITE HERE Local 26 dining hall workers have. Discrimination based on race, sex, nationality, sexual orientation or gender identity will not be tolerated and can be grieved to arbitration, including sexual harassment.

Management has told the students that they should trust them on sexual harassment and racism. Not one student trusts management on these issues, and the students know that the university has been perpetuating and promoting racism and sexism for over 350 years since Harvard’s inception.

Strikers’ tactics included picketing classes, stopping trucks from making deliveries, disrupting the presidents’ speeches and leading classroom walkouts. Harvard management refused to negotiate Oct. 28, saying that they did not like the tactics of the union — so HGSU increased their tactics.



Striking Harvard graduate students with supporters from UNITE-HERE Local 26, which represents Harvard dining hall workers.

Four unions on campus — Harvard Union of Clerical and Technical Workers, AFSCME Local 3650; UNITE/HERE Local 26; SEIU 32BJ, representing custodians and guards; and HGSU — have joined together to support each other while they all start negotiating their contracts with Harvard management. All the unions came to the rallies of the HGSU, spoke of their support and supported each other’s job actions.

Supporters of the Harvard graduate students disrupted a speech by Harvard President Lawrence Bakow during a parent-student orientation. Demonstrators shouted: “I stand with student workers. ... None of us want abusers on campus.” The 40 demonstrators exited the auditorium to applause from the remaining attendees.

Transportation workers

Reno, Nev., Teamsters Local 533 bus drivers ended their strike after finally winning concessions over scheduling and time off from Keolis, a privately owned bus company based in France. The drivers have been fighting for months and were on strike for 25 days in October. The striking workers mobilized the community to support them. According to bus driver and shop steward Michael Lansborough, “Working-class people need to know: It’s time for us to unite. Not only unite individually into unions, but unite as a whole to beat down this corporate attitude that they can just walk all over everybody.” (Payday Report, Oct. 21)

Southeastern Pennsylvania Transit Authority (SEPTA) and Transit Workers Union Local 234 bus drivers reached a tentative agreement last week, after the union voted to strike on Nov. 1 if contract negotiations broke down. Union leadership stressed how the drivers were essential employees during the pandemic, risking their and their families’ health and welfare to keep SEPTA operating. In fact, 11 SEPTA workers died during the height of the pandemic from COVID.

TWU Local 234 represents 5,000 bus, trolley and subway drivers along with station cashiers and mechanics. Included in the agreement is a retroactive pandemic hazard pay plan and two weeks of paid parental leave for the birth or adoption of a child. A ratification vote is scheduled for Nov. 5. The historically militant Local 234 has struck SEPTA 13 times since 1975.

Phebe Eckfeldt contributed to this article.

Strikers vote down second contract at John Deere

By Martha Grevatt

Bulletin: This article was written before the contract vote. On Nov. 2 John Deere UAW members voted down the second contract, 55% against.

Members of the United Auto Workers have been on strike at 14 John Deere plants since Oct. 14. The 10,100 workers are primarily in Iowa, Illinois and Indiana, with additional locations in

no changes to health benefits. Workers strongly objected to language that would put those hired after a certain date in an inferior pension program, and that language appears to have been withdrawn. But language already giving “post-1997” workers lower pay and lesser benefits and pensions has not been eliminated.

Under the two-tier system, lower seniority workers are paid less and have a different benefit package than “traditional” workers, even when they work side-by-side doing the same job. Unfortunately, since 2007 tiered pension plans have been in place in UAW contracts with Ford, General Motors and Stellantis (which owns Chrysler). The John Deere and Caterpillar master contracts have had two-tier systems for pay, benefits and pensions since the late 1990s, following the breaking of the Caterpillar strike.

There are a few factors that might embolden the workers to hold out for better contract terms. One is the overwhelming union and community support the strikers have garnered. This

was clear during a recent tragic death of a striker killed in the line of duty — hit by a driver while leaving his shift on the picket line. Union members across the country are trying to find out how to offer financial assistance to his family.

The union won a rare victory in court, when Iowa District Court Judge Paul Scott denied a request from Deere management for an injunction limiting pickets to four per entrance and barring them altogether from one particular location.

“Deere has failed to establish an invasion or threatened invasion of a right, that substantial injuries or damages will result unless an injunction is granted,” Judge Scott ruled. (weareiowa.com)

For a judge to deny an injunction limiting pickets at a strikebound company is almost unheard of. The ruling shows the capitalist courts are feeling the pressure of an increasingly militant working class, fed up with unsafe workplaces, long hours and stagnant wages in the midst of

galloping inflation.

There has been an uptick in strike activity, especially in the month of “Striketober,” with workers feeling their strength as bosses struggle to find people willing to work under current terms and conditions.

Recent strikes pose a threat to both capital and conciliatory labor leaders. How the Deere strikers vote will be an important indicator of how hard workers are willing to fight to retain and win back lost gains and block further contract concessions. □



John Deere strikers in Waterloo, Iowa, with supporters from Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union who brought food and supplies Oct. 29.

Georgia, Colorado and Kansas. The strike began days after 90% of the workers voted down the first contract UAW negotiators presented to them.

Now they have been asked to vote Nov. 2 on a second tentative agreement which, if passed, will end the strike. Deere workers will remain on the picket line at least until the vote is complete. If they vote down this contract, the UAW may continue the strike.

This contract offers larger pay increases than the first contract, and there are

Rally demands CUNY budget increases

By G. Dunkel

The Professional Staff Congress (AFT 2334) represents 25,000 faculty and staff at the City University of New York. CUNY is an unusual higher education public institution, since it is funded by both the state and city of New York.

A rally called by the PSC at the CUNY Board of Trustees meeting Oct. 25 drew over 100 faculty, staff and students to the physical demonstration on the campus of Baruch College. Hundreds more participated online through live streaming of the event.

The union is demanding the trustees support an increase of \$416 million in operating aid and the \$1.25 billion in capital investment requested by CUNY’s

administration. The demonstrators called on Gov. Kathy Hochul and presumptive NYC Mayor Eric Adams to fully fund the request.

The CUNY student body is predominantly Black, Brown and low-income.

Some of the speakers supported CUNY having free tuition, as it did when its student body was predominantly white. □



WW PHOTO: G. DUNKEL

Washington state

Incarcerated migrants win minimum wage victory

By Jim McMahan
Seattle

After years of hunger strikes, immigrant workers detained at the Northwest Detention Center in Tacoma, Wash., have won the right to be paid for their labor at the same minimum wage that is mandated for non-incarcerated workers. Washington's state minimum wage is \$13.69 an hour.

The private for-profit owner, GEO Group, has been paying the prisoner workers only a dollar a day. These workers do all the real work inside the place where they are incarcerated — the cooking, laundry, cleaning and other maintenance jobs.

On Oct. 27, a federal jury found GEO had been violating Washington state minimum wage laws for over 15 years. The company currently operates 57 prisons and detainee facilities inside the U.S.

The minimum wage boost comes



Incarcerated workers on strike against horrific conditions at the Northwest Detention Center were supported by La Resistencia, Dec. 15, 2020.

from a lawsuit filed by Washington State Attorney General Bob Ferguson. In a separate lawsuit, on Oct. 29 a jury awarded \$17.3 million in lost wages to all prisoners detained since 2014 in the Northwest

Detention Center. GEO will likely appeal these decisions.

This prison labor victory comes as a result of years of hunger strikes by incarcerated workers, at least 20 of those at Northwest. The hunger strikes have often been combined with work stoppages, with the minimum wage being one of the top demands. Since the COVID pandemic began, adequate prevention, testing and treatment have been key demands.

The migrant detainees have been greatly aided on the outside by the solidarity group La Resistencia. The International Action Center has also brought solidarity.

La Resistencia NW held its Seventh Annual Día de los Muertos (Day of the Dead) on Oct. 31 at the Tacoma detention prison. The ceremony honored incarcerated Northwest workers who have died because of the inhumane immigration system: Mergensana Amar, Señor Jose, Jose Quinones and Cipriano Rios, a leader in struggle who died in Mexico in 2020 soon after being released.

The Washington state labor victory, which strikes a blow against imprisoned peoples' conditions of bondage, should help incarcerated people everywhere in the U.S. Prisoners in New Mexico, Colorado and California have also filed suits — not yet successful — demanding the minimum wage in their detention centers.

The struggle continues against slave labor in prison, which is still legal under the 13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. □

Miami defenders rally for release of twice-kidnapped Venezuelan diplomat Alex Saab

By Lauren Smith

Bulletin: On Nov. 1 U.S. District Judge Robert Scola dropped all but one money laundering charge against Alex Saab, but the one remaining count of "conspiracy to commit money laundering" carries a maximum sentence of 20 years. Saab continues to be denied access to legal counsel and to cancer medications.

The article below has been edited.

On Sunday, Oct. 24, representatives from more than six independent activist groups led by the Bolivarian Circle of Miami joined forces at the foot of the statue of Latin American hero, Simón Bolívar, in the Miami Torch of Friendship Park, to demand Venezuelan Deputy Ambassador to the African Union Alex Saab's immediate release from U.S. prison and repatriation to Venezuela.

The Venezuelan diplomat was kidnapped twice by Washington. First, Saab was kidnapped under orders of the Trump administration on June 12, 2020, while his plane refueled in Cape Verde, then again under the Biden administration on Oct. 16, from Cape Verde to Miami. Ambassador Saab was abducted from Cape Verde without the knowledge of his legal team or family the day before the island's presidential election.

It was rightfully feared by Washington that the sure-to-be-elected opposition government in Cape Verde would resist their criminal dictates and immediately free Ambassador Saab — and thus no longer be a stooge for the U.S. diplomatic hostage-taking and its infliction of physical and psychological torture.

While in custody, three of diplomat Saab's molar teeth were broken, and he was repeatedly beaten and subjected to electroshock among degrading "searches," long periods in stress positions, the withholding of food and water for three days and coercion through deplorable holding cell conditions. Additionally, diplomat Saab was denied medication for treating cancer and his other critical needs.

Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro explained on state TV that interrogators

in Cape Verde used electric shocks to torture Ambassador Saab and extract a false confession that in the end never came: "They wanted to force him into becoming a monster, a false accuser against Venezuela, against me and against the Bolivarian revolution — something he never allowed." Nonetheless, Ambassador Saab released a statement that he "is of sound mind and not suicidal." He is rightfully concerned that the authorities will fake his murder. Diplomat Saab pledged his fidelity to President Maduro and the Venezuelan people.

Ambassador Saab urged everyone to "be strong and always stay united" for justice for the people of Venezuela and all those oppressed worldwide by illegal U.S. unilateral economic sanctions — which amount to nothing less than gangster imperialism.

According to U.S. authorities, Ambassador Saab is being held in a federal prison in Miami near its courthouse. This could not be confirmed by his legal team or his supporters and remains a point of concern at this time — as Ambassador Saab was only permitted to view his Miami court arraignment on Monday, Oct. 18, by video. Alex Saab's next court appearance was Nov. 1, and support groups organized events.

Multiple violations of international law

Washington's actions against diplomat Saab contradict both international and humanitarian laws. First, in Cape Verde diplomat Saab was illegally arrested, since it was carried out in advance of Interpol's "red-notice." Additionally, on March 15, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) court ruled that the continued detention and push for extradition of Saab, by the Cape Verde government was illegal.

Second, charges of money laundering were dropped by Switzerland, upon review by a Genevan investigation, for inadequate evidence.

Third, the United States' case has no legal standing. It erroneously claims that Ambassador Saab was bribing Venezuelan government officials. If this is the case, then clearly this matter belongs in Venezuelan court, not in Miami using

up federal and state tax dollars.

Fourth, with diplomatic status, Alex Saab cannot be arrested or imprisoned under international law.

Fifth, charges levied against Ambassador Saab involve his circumventing U.S. unilateral coercive economic sanctions waged against the Venezuelan people — which are illegal under both



In Caracas, Venezuela, there are many expressions of public support for diplomat Alex Saab, who was working to end the U.S. blockade of his country.

international and humanitarian law. This charge makes Ambassador Saab a hero for his repeated delivery of food and medicine to the impoverished. And as such, all people of conscience in and on behalf of 39 countries illegally oppressed by U.S. unilateral economic sanctions ally with Simón Bolívar and Alex Saab against Yankee imperialism today and always.

Without question and by admission, unilateral coercive economic sanctions are done routinely to "make the economy scream" and "enable regime change" in the targeted country. However, in the longstanding cases of both Cuba and Iran, this strategy hasn't worked. In the case of Venezuela, it is hoped by Washington that the starvation and illness of its people will somehow facilitate the giveaway of its oil reserve, the largest in the world, to Exxon Mobil.

Judge and prosecutors responsible for Saab's treatment

U.S. Magistrate Judge John J. O'Sullivan of the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Florida is presiding over the case of Ambassador

Saab. Trial Attorney Alexander Kramer and Assistant U.S. Attorney Kurt K. Lunkenheimer are prosecuting the case.

The aforementioned judge and prosecutors are responsible for the illegality of these charges and for Ambassador Saab's continued health and safety.

Alexa Weber, leader for the Bolivarian circle of Miami, provided interviews to

independent press, and the following speakers were informative and energizing, leading the diverse group in chants to support President Maduro's leadership, freedom for diplomat Alex Saab and Hands-off Venezuela, Cuba and Nicaragua: Cassia Laham from Power People's Opposition to War, Imperialism and Racism and United National Antiwar Coalition; Kahlil Sankara from Troika Collective; Didier Ortiz from Bolivarian Circle of

Miami and Troika Collective; Will Blake from Committee to Stop FBI Repression; and Pete Seidman from Hands off Cuba and Venezuela.

Please follow the above-referenced groups for evolving information on Ambassador Saab's next court appearance scheduled for Nov 1. Washington be warned — Alex Saab is already considered a humanitarian in the international community and with U.S. activists. If he's incapacitated or murdered in custody, Ambassador Saab will be elevated to martyr status, and his image will be used worldwide in perpetuity to rally millions against illegal U.S. unilateral coercive economic sanctions that kill the impoverished.

Lauren Smith is an independent journalist and member of the Green Party and SanctionsKill.com. Her work has been published by Alliance for Global Justice, Black Agenda Report, Common Dreams, Counterpunch, Global Research CA, Monthly Review and Telesur among others.

Justice again denied for Mumia Abu-Jamal

By **Betsey Piette**
Philadelphia

The Pennsylvania Superior Court on Oct. 26 denied Pennsylvania political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal’s appeals, filed in 2019 following a December 2018 decision by Pennsylvania Common Pleas Court Judge Leon Tucker that awarded Abu-Jamal the right to reopen his Post-Conviction Relief Appeals.

His appellate case, first filed in August 2016 and heard in a courtroom April 24, 2017, was based on the 2016 U.S. Supreme Court ruling, *Williams v. Pennsylvania*. This case found due process was violated when former Pennsylvania Supreme Court Justice Ronald Castille participated in the consideration of Terrance Williams’ appeal in a capital post-conviction case.

Abu-Jamal’s attorneys Judith Ritter and Sam Spital argued that Castille was also the district attorney when Abu-Jamal was convicted, and he was a state Supreme Court judge when Mumia initially filed his PCRA appeals. As Philadelphia District Attorney, Castille approved



Mumia Abu-Jamal

decisions to seek the death penalty. The SCOTUS ruling established that a petitioner is entitled to relief when a reasonable observer could conclude that a judge harbored disqualifying bias against the petitioner.

Tucker’s decision was based on finding a letter to then-Governor Robert Casey from Castille that showed improper judicial bias. Castille wrote: “I urge you to send a clear and dramatic message to all police killers that the death penalty in Pennsylvania actually means something.”

At the time, Abu-Jamal was one of a handful of incarcerated people facing the death penalty on a conviction involving the murder of a police officer.

Tucker’s was a split decision. He did conclude that the U.S. Supreme Court 2016 decision in *Williams v. Pennsylvania* did not fully apply. While Tucker’s court was in session, no other proof was found in hundreds of file boxes provided by the Commonwealth to show that Castille, as Philadelphia district attorney, had played a significant personal role in Abu-Jamal’s case before later denying his appeals while a judge.

However, within days of Tucker’s decision, Philadelphia District Attorney Larry Krasner announced finding several evidence boxes related to the case, hidden in a remote storage area. These files contained evidence of prosecutorial misconduct, which became the basis of a request by Abu-Jamal’s attorneys for a new evidentiary hearing.

Summarizing the *Williams* ruling, Tucker wrote: “If a judge served as a prosecutor and then the judge, there is a

finding of automatic bias and due process violation. “The slightest appearance of bias or lack of impartiality undermines the entire judiciary. ... True justice must be completely just without even a hint of partiality, lack of integrity or impropriety. ... Petitioner is entitled to an unbiased tribunal, without even the appearance of impropriety.”

The Superior Court’s latest decision was based on the court’s view that Judge Tucker was wrong when he determined that the newly found evidence demonstrated bias on Castille’s part. The court decided this even though Krasner had withdrawn his initial appeal of Tucker’s ruling.

The clearly erroneous and openly biased ruling by the state’s lower court’s judges, elected with the support and funding of the Fraternal Order of Police, calls into question their ability to acknowledge or even recognize bias when it hits them full frontal. Their ruling comes just weeks before elections that will impact the makeup of the court. Several Superior Court justices are running for seats on the state’s Supreme Court.

Today’s decision does not affect “new evidence” claims which will still be litigated. Krasner has indicated he has no objections to this evidence being heard in the Court of Common Pleas.

Once again the court system, permeated with the rank-est racist bias, cannot be relied on for justice in this nearly 40-year-old case. We need to renew and strengthen the movement to bring Mumia home. □

David Gilbert to be released from prison after 40 years—Free Dr. Mutulu Shakur!

By **Judy Greenspan**

Finally, after 40 years of incarceration, the New York State Parole Board did the right thing on Oct. 26 and ordered the release of David Gilbert, who is currently imprisoned at Shawangunk Correctional Facility, near Walkill, N.Y. Gilbert had been part of a group of white anti-imperialist political prisoners who had supported the Black Liberation Army, the Puerto Rican Nationalists and other liberation struggles. However, his co-defendant, Dr. Mutulu Shakur, remains in prison, suffering from life-threatening bone cancer.

Gilbert has been in prison since 1981 after being caught with BLA members and others who were trying to rob a Brinks truck in upstate New York. During this action, a guard and two policemen were killed. His trial resulted in Gilbert being sentenced to 75 years to life in prison in 1983.

Gilbert has a long history in the anti-racist, anti-colonial struggle, dating back to his involvement in Students for a Democratic Society and then later as a member of the Weather Underground.

While in prison, Gilbert started a model peer education program for incarcerated people with HIV/AIDS; it spread from prison to prison. He worked tirelessly with people held in several prisons and reached out to activists outside the walls who were involved in similar advocacy. For his efforts, Gilbert was punished, locked down and frequently transferred from prison to prison. His

work eventually paid off when the NYS prison system was forced to adopt a similar program in many men’s prisons.

Not surprisingly, Gilbert’s co-defendants, Kathy Boudin and Judy Clarke, were busy at Bedford Hills Women’s Prison in New York, running another HIV/AIDS peer education program. Named ACE — AIDS, Counseling and Education — this program has been internationally acclaimed and is still in existence today.

On Oct. 19, Gilbert was eligible for a parole hearing, and seven days later the 77-year-old was granted parole. This followed the commutation of his sentence in August by then-Gov. Andrew Cuomo. Gilbert is set to be released by Nov. 30. His son, Chesa Boudin, who was one of the fiercest campaigners for his father’s release, is currently the district attorney of San Francisco.

Free all political prisoners!

Dr. Shakur was given a 60-year sentence for his involvement in the Brinks robbery in 1986. Despite being seriously ill, he was denied parole for the ninth time in January. His next parole hearing is in 2022. This renowned political prisoner is not scheduled for release until December 2024. Currently, he is incarcerated at FMC Lexington in Kentucky.

As a teenager, Dr. Shakur was a member of the Revolutionary Action Movement and the Republic of New Africa. He worked with the Lincoln Hospital’s Detox Community Program in the South Bronx, which used acupuncture and holistic health methods, rather than methadone, to counter addiction. Shakur became a certified doctor of acupuncture and founded the Black Acupuncture

Advisory Association of North America and the Harlem Institute of Acupuncture.

Dr. Shakur, who was the stepfather of slain activist rap artist Tupac Shakur, started Dare to Struggle while incarcerated, and put together a 10th anniversary tribute to his son.

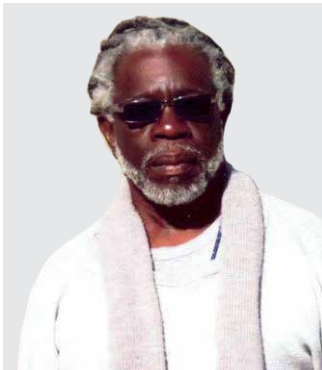
A campaign is underway to get President Joe Biden to grant clemency to Dr. Shakur. To find out more information about it and to sign the petition, check out the Family and Friends of Dr. Mutulu

Shakur website. (mutulushakur.com) .

2021 was designated the Year of the Political Prisoner. As this year comes to an end, it is clear that Dr. Shakur is only one of the many political prisoners still languishing in U.S. federal and state prisons. It is time to ensure that he and all political prisoners are set free, including Sundiata Acoli, Mumia Abu-Jamal, Leonard Peltier and all the others. Free them all! □



David Gilbert



Dr. Mutulu Shakur

FREE POLITICAL PRISONERS!

FREE THEM ALL!

TEAR DOWN THE WALLS

International Tribunal finds U.S. guilty of crimes against humanity

By Monica Moorehead

The International Tribunal on Human Rights Abuses Against Black, Brown and Indigenous Peoples was held Oct. 23-25 at The Malcolm X and Dr. Betty Shabazz Memorial and Educational Center in Washington Heights, New York City, aka Turtle Island, Lenape land. The main theme of the Tribunal was “We Still Charge Genocide” in recognition of the “We Charge Genocide: The Crime of Government Against the Negro People” — a 1951 petition to the United Nations signed by dozens of notables including Dr. W.E.B. Du Bois, Claudia Jones, Harry Haywood and Paul Robeson.

The 2021 indictment is against the United States of America, represented by its President, Department of State, federal and state policing agencies and other governmental institutions. The following is an edited version of the findings presented at a press conference at the United Nations Church Center, Oct. 25. Go to the Spirit of Mandela Facebook page at tinyurl.com/75syh4px for video testimonies, findings and verdict. WW will be writing on the five indictments including testimonies of witnesses in future issues.

Background

The Panel of Jurists heard testimony emphasizing the millions upon millions of Indigenous and African peoples murdered, disappeared and nearly exterminated over a period from 1492 through the present. Further, the witnesses and prosecution argued that the wrongs have been historic and deliberate, with colonization, racism, militarism, imperialism, materialism, criminalization, patriarchy, neocolonialism and internal colonialism as part of the larger process that now manifests itself in medical and digital apartheid, chemical warfare, environmental violence and racism, disinvestment and a pandemic of accessible guns and drugs — with the majority of gun violence perpetrated by police and security forces in the false claim of upholding law and order.

Statements were made testifying to new forms of colonialism which include the Prison Industrial Complex, the Military Industrial Complex and the commercialization of our health and privatization/commodification of all social services.

The testimonies include substantial evidence of the erasure of histories; distortion and cultural misappropriation contributes to and exacerbates the attempted invisibilization and denial of People’s basic humanity. The profound impacts of all of these realities extend beyond the erasure and attempt to exterminate Black, Brown and Indigenous lives. Hence, as one witness stated, “the colonization of the spirit and mind continues to this day.”

The testimonies of this Tribunal reaffirm the traditional wisdom and knowledge of Black, Brown and Indigenous Peoples. Strong evidence was presented on the indomitable, unbreakable resistance and resilience of the peoples’ struggle for justice and dignity. In the face of egregious human rights violations and crimes against humanity, this spirit of collective survival shone through.

The 2021 International Tribunal on U.S. Human Rights Abuses Against Black, Brown and Indigenous Peoples was initiated by a U.S. coalition. In the Spirit of Mandela. Its own recognized legacy,



WW PHOTO: MONICA MOOREHEAD

International Panel of Jurists hold Oct. 25 press conference at U.N. to present verdict.

based on efforts dating from the 1951 “We Charge Genocide” petition to the present, rests on the idea that any examination of U.S. human rights must be done in an international context. The Panel of Jurists came together as an independent body made up of legal scholars, human rights advocates, and activists and community leaders.

Utilizing the International Criminal Law on Genocide and other instruments, the Panel convened to hear and review the testimony organized by the Spirit of Mandela Legal Team. The Accused, though informed, did not respond to the charges and indictment against them, nor did they appear as invited to present a defense.

Proceedings

The following is a summarized and preliminary presentation of the testimony.

Police Killings

Testimony was heard regarding an alarming pattern and practice of police murdering Black, Brown and Indigenous Peoples with impunity. We were informed that a recent Commission of Inquiry found that “Black people are 3.5 times more likely than white people to be killed by police, when Blacks are not attacking or do not have a weapon.” Disaggregated data for other Peoples is lacking.

Mass Incarceration

Testimony emphasized that in the case of U.S. Constitutional law, while the 13th Amendment promised the abolition of the process of chattel slavery, it in fact created an exception incentivizing the incarceration of people of African descent and other peoples. Further they argued that a school-to-prison pipeline has been set in motion by the racialized policies and programs of the U.S. federal and state governments. One testimonial noted, “the law is used as a weapon of war” against Black, Brown and Indigenous Peoples. Further testimony indicates that there are U.S. policies of wars on poverty, wars on drugs, wars on terror and others — amounting to a war on Black, Brown and Indigenous Peoples as they disproportionately criminalize their youth and communities.

Political Prisoners/Prisoners of War

Arguments were made presenting the criminalization of legitimate political struggles, most particularly of Black, Brown and Indigenous Peoples. One witness testified that it is like a “Counter-Intelligence Program on steroids.” Several witnesses testified that with regard to traditional torture techniques, there is ample evidence of solitary confinement lasting for decades, which goes

so far beyond the U.N.-constituted definitions of torture that they defy any modern standard of humane government.

Further testimony was presented arguing that decades-long sentences have been imposed for those imprisoned for their political beliefs. One witness stated, “the U.S. is the only industrialized nation in the world that denies the existence of political prisoners.”

Environmental Racism

Testimony was received arguing the impact of environmental violence. It asserted that the climate crisis disproportionately impacts Black, Brown and Indigenous Peoples, constituting environmental violence. The Prosecution contended that there is a deliberate and callous poisoning of land, water, air and soil, reflecting the valuing of profits over peoples, which threatens the survival of the planet and impacts most devastatingly the lives of Black, Brown and Indigenous Peoples.



WW PHOTO: MONICA MOOREHEAD

Sharonne Salaam, mother of Yusef Salaam — one of the falsely accused and imprisoned Central Park 5 youth — provides testimony Oct. 23 on trauma her son, family suffered.

Public Health Inequities

The testimony highlighted deep public health inequities including both physical and mental health manifestations. Further assertions were made that the COVID-19 pandemic and an “inadequate and incompetent federal response to this crisis” magnified the disparate impact of structural racism affecting access to health care.

Moreover, testimony was heard regarding indifference to the suffering of groups of people considered expendable due to the profit model of U.S. health care, leaving behind those most vulnerable. The Prosecution argued that, from forced sterilization to “food deserts” and chemical contamination, from toxic stress based on the environment in which one lives to the criminalization of mental illness, Black, Brown and Indigenous Peoples are neglected and left out of any illusion of the human right to health.

While these crimes are well-

documented, they have more rarely been acknowledged, remedied and addressed with some very distant from public knowledge.

Judgment

Despite the need for further deliberation on the extensive submissions and documents from varied expert witnesses, a deep analysis from the Jurists found that the process did sufficiently cover the scope and elements of all five counts in the indictment as having legal standing and hence legitimacy.

The Jurists further establish that the grounds for each of the five counts in the indictment presented the basis for successful intervention due to the extensive testimonies of both witnesses and expert witnesses.

A full and detailed judgment will follow regarding our findings on these counts. Any minority position of the Jurists will be developed, with collective consensus on each count asserted to further advance our recommendations for remediation, reparations and future actions.

After having heard the testimony of numerous victims of Police Racism, Mass Incarceration, Environmental Racism, Public Health Inequities and of Political Prisoners/Prisoners of War, together with the expert testimonies and graphic presentations, as well as the copious documentation submitted and admitted in the record, the Panel of Jurists find the U.S. and its subdivisions GUILTY of all five counts. We find grounds that Acts of Genocide have been committed.

Signed, October 25, 2021, Panel of Jurists
Church Center of the United Nations

Chief: Her Honorable Magdalene Moonsamy (South Africa), former Member of Parliament (ANC)

Deputy Chief: Wilma E. Reverón Collazo (Puerto Rico), long-standing member and leader, Colegio de Abogados de Puerto Rico (Puerto Rican Bar Association)

Dr. Vickie Casanova-Willis (U.S.), Executive Director, U.S. Human Rights Network; past president, National Conference of Black Lawyers (NCBL); founding member of Black People Against Police Torture

Sherly Fabre (Haiti/U.S.), International Fellowship of Reconciliation United Nations Representative; member, Muslim Peace Fellowship/Community of Living Traditions

Professor Mireille Fanon Mendès-France (France), former Chair of the United Nations Working Group on People of African Descent; former Commissioner of the 2020 International Commission on Inquiry (Systemic Racist Police Violence against U.S. People of African Descent); Co-Chair of the Frantz Fanon Foundation

Dr. Alexander Hinton (USA), Director of the Center for the Study of Genocide and Human Rights, Rutgers University; UNESCO Chair on Genocide Prevention

Chairman Brian Moskwetah Weedon (Mashpee Wampanoag), Chairman of the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe; Co-President/Trustee of the United National Indian Tribal Youth (UNITY)

Binalakshmi “Bina” Nepam (Manipur/Northeast India), Founder-Director, Manipur Women Gun Survivors Network; Founder-Director, Global Alliance of Indigenous Peoples, Gender Justice and Peace □

Masses resist Sudan coup

Continued from page 1

middle-class business councils and moderate political parties.

The upheaval led to a group within the military aligning with the movement and arresting President Omar al-Bashir, a general who had held power since 1989. Though millions of people were swept into motion in the revolutionary upheaval, developments were cut short by a 2019 agreement between more moderate business forces, political parties and the Sudanese military to form the Sudanese Sovereign Council.

The agreement was that this transitional government would move toward an elected democratic government by 2022.

The more business-oriented elements made this compromise after a June 3, 2019, massacre of people in a peaceful sit-in at army headquarters. Over 100 demonstrators were killed, and thousands were injured. The attack came from the Rapid Support Forces, whose commander backs General Burhan.

Because of the military role in the coalition council, the SCP and the SPA — along with neighborhood resistance committees and most trade union organizations — refused to take part in the transitional government. Their focus has been to continue to organize at the grassroots level.

However, these groups mobilized to defend the transitional arrangement every time the government was threatened by a military takeover.

Decades of U.S. interference

The U.S. has focused on destabilizing and dividing Sudan, with more than 30 years of U.S. sanctions that have strangled the country. In 1998 a U.S. missile attack destroyed Sudan's only pharmaceutical plant; and there have been years of Israeli bombardment of Sudan with U.S. backing. U.S. efforts to partition the country include backing various separatist breakaway attempts, like in Darfur in west Sudan, not to mention the U.S. role in the Peace Agreement of 2005 between Sudan and South Sudan and immediate



Sudanese demand civilian rule, Khartoum, Oct. 21.

recognition of South Sudan in 2011.

The unstable coalition government in 2019 — made up of competing economic forces — attempted to negotiate a deal with Washington to lift the sanctions and provide some economic relief to the population. Unable to resist demands from the Trump and the Biden administrations, the Sovereign Council signed agreements over the past two years with dangerous internal and international implications. The Sudanese government under the Council agreed to recognize the state of Israel — a huge concession, considering Sudan's decades of defense of Palestine and the fact that Israel had repeatedly bombed targets in Sudan for years.

In order to lift the U.S. designation that Sudan was a “state sponsor of terrorism,” in 2019 Prime Minister Hamdok — prior to his visit to Washington — signed a law to dismantle and confiscate organizations or businesses that supported Palestinian charities. Sudanese assets of Hamas connected to business people in besieged Gaza were seized. Hezbollah supporters were expelled. Palestinian students from Gaza could no longer gain university education in Sudan.

For decades, people and resistance organizations from countries under U.S. control throughout the Arab world had sought refuge in Sudan. Suddenly they

were at risk.

The transitional government signed an agreement to pay \$335 million to U.S. families who were “victims of terror attacks” in several African countries. These attacks had not taken place in Sudan. A future \$700 million loan to the battered Sudanese economy was contingent on this payment. Almost half the money dangled as U.S. “economic relief” had to first be paid to the U.S.!

In exchange for these and other concessions, the U.S. Department of Commerce declared Jan. 19 that Sudan was “open for business.” But while some sanctions on Sudan were lifted, other sanctions were left in place, subject to meeting further U.S. demands.

U.S. military recolonizing threats

In March the coalition government was forced to “welcome” to Port Sudan the USS Winston Churchill, a guided-missile destroyer. U.S. war ships have not had access to Sudan for more than 30 years.

The destroyer is an ominous threat. And Winston Churchill is reviled in Sudan as an arrogant, racist colonialist, who launched his political career as a cavalry officer in the Sudan during the British colonial army's defeat of the Mahdi uprising at the Battle of Omdurman on Sept. 2, 1898. The Mahdi movement had assembled a unified, disciplined force of more than 100,000 Sudanese soldiers and succeeded in halting British domination for almost two decades. The anti-colonial movement was founded by religious leader Muhammad Ahmad bin Abd Allah, or Mahdi.

Churchill's war correspondent accounts from the front enthusiastically described the defeat of the Mahdi Army, mowed down by British machine guns and cross-fire from British gunboats. The battle at Omdurman — a city located strategically across from Khartoum where the Blue and White Nile Rivers converge — was a

turning point in securing British colonial domination in Africa.

Now, in an echo of old colonial rule, the USS Winston Churchill glides into a Sudanese harbor — and an opening for AFRICOM, the U.S. Africa Command, to “partner” with Sudan's military is under “friendly discussion.”

U.S. backs capitalist “reform”

The U.S. has backed the return of the depredations of the International Monetary Fund on Sudan's battered economy. The IMF demanded Sudan end fuel and food subsidies to the population in June, doubling the cost of gasoline and diesel overnight, raising the cost of food and essential supplies and sending inflation soaring.

The subsidies had ensured basic subsistence. But the weak government, trying to meet U.S. demands, complied with IMF-monitored “reforms.” Now the most desperate part of the population is increasingly dependent on the “charity” of U.N. and U.S. aid organizations for handouts.

What Sudan needs and wants to buy is equipment and technology for development. For this, they need access to banking and financial credit, which the IMF dangles.

So far, international assistance with development has only come from China, which has been willing to aid in infrastructure and transport technology.

Mass demonstrations rise up

Mass demonstrations met the transitional government's decision to end food and fuel subsidies. Sudan had already, at IMF demand, devalued its currency in February. The end of subsidies was another devastating blow to all workers.

In June the demonstrations were organized by the SPA and the SCP. These are the forces opposing the military coup now.

U.S. machinations to disrupt Sudan are part of its plan to dominate Africa, extending far beyond Sudan. The U.S. works to undermine the security and stability of every country it targets, regardless of size. Redivision and weakening of independence is imperialism's goal in the service of relentless concentration of capital and corporate domination.

To strengthen resistance to this brutal exploitation, the general strike and heroic resistance in Sudan need the full solidarity of all working people — especially here in the U.S.

The power of working-class organizations to unify and organize millions of workers, peasants and oppressed nationalities to defend their own interests against these exploitative deals and military coups is the way forward. □



Barricade at coup protest, Khartoum, Oct. 25.

Honor Day of Mourning — Support Workers World

Workers World honors Indigenous peoples on their commemoration of the 52nd National Day of Mourning on Nov. 25, on so-called “Thanksgiving.” On that special day, Native people pay homage to their ancestors and tell their true history as the original inhabitants of this country, while exposing European colonialists' massive crimes against Indigenous people, including theft of their lands and foods, obliteration of their culture, and racism, oppression and genocide.

In 1970, United American Indians of New England gathered in Plymouth, Mass., site of the original “Pilgrim” invasion, and observed the first National Day of Mourning. Only Indigenous people

spoke then, and this is still true.*

Workers World has attended the Day of Mourning commemorations every year since 1981 and has reported firsthand on these events on our pages.

WW applauds Indigenous peoples in the U.S. and globally who fight oppression and lead struggles to save lands, forests and rivers from capitalist destruction. Our newspaper hails courageous Native water, land and forest protectors who lead these movements, often putting their lives on the line to confront rapacious corporations, which, in their reckless drive for profits, harm the planet.

We especially honor those who have lost their lives in these struggles, including Indigenous organizer and Lenca

leader, Berta Caceres, of Honduras.

WW has continually supported Native peoples' struggles on the lands, in the streets and in our newspaper. We call on our readers and supporters to support these movements and join in the commemoration of the National Day of Mourning.

Your help is needed!

The WW Supporter Program was founded 44 years ago to help build this socialist newspaper. Since the early 1990s, it has supported workers.org, the website where new WW articles are posted daily, and each week's full issue is displayed in a pdf document. The newspaper is printed and mailed out monthly.

For annual donations of \$60, \$120 or \$300, members receive a year's subscription, letters about timely issues and gift subscriptions. Supporters can receive the book, “What road to socialism?” (Notify us.) Or read it at workers.org/books.

Write and mail monthly or annual checks to Workers World, 147 W. 24th St., 2nd Floor, New York, NY 10011. (Include your name and address.) Or donate at workers.org.

* For more history and information, read “National Day of Mourning: The truth about the Pilgrims' invasion and 400+ years of genocide that followed” in the Nov. 28, 2019 issue of WW newspaper at workers.org/2019/11/44570 □

Haiti totters on the abyss

U.S. big-business press calls for intervention

By G. Dunkel

Oct. 31 — The Haitian economy lacks the fuel it needs to function. Because Haiti's electric grid is unreliable, hospitals, factories, banks, cell phone towers, schools, taxis and the "tap taps" that provide public transport — are cutting back or shutting down.

Digicel, the company that runs the largest digital phone service in Haiti, announced at the end of October that they have around 25% of their cell sites off air due to the lack of fuel, which puts a couple hundred thousand customers without service.

Hospitals rely on generators to run their equipment, and they have to shut down when their generators run out of fuel. Staff — doctors, nurses and support staff — have trouble getting to work, because taxis and the privately owned small buses called "tap taps" are scarce.

Transportation difficulties have driven up the price of food. Of Haiti's 11 million people, 4.4 million need food assistance, according to the United Nations.

The Washington Post, the New York Times as well as Le Monde and the Miami Herald have all blamed this scarcity of fuel on so-called "gangs" that are demanding payments to allow fuel trucks to pass through territory they control. They are mainly found in Port-au-Prince, yet the scarcity of fuel affects the whole country, which raises doubts about their responsibility for the fuel crisis.

These groups have a history of being paid, armed and directed by the government, politicians of all sorts and businesses. Now, however, under the pressure



Oct. 18, mural, signs in Haiti call for general strike.

of events, the gangs are beginning to organize and act in a way which is no longer totally at the service of their past masters.

Frantz Duval, who is the editor in chief of the daily newspaper Le Nouvelliste, told Radio France International this weekend that the reason for fuel scarcity is that the country didn't order enough fuel for its known needs.

Both the Miami Herald and the Washington Post have called for "foreign intervention" in Haiti, claiming that the situation was so dire that Haitians couldn't be expected to resolve it on their own.

There are two competing proposals for elections and economic recovery being discussed. The U.S. State Department and White House publicly back both plans. Haitian analysts believe the U.S.

privately prefers the proposals made by acting interim Prime Minister Ariel Henry, a politician without much popular support.

When a prosecutor was considering charging him for complicity in the assassination of Jovenel Moïse, Henry responded by firing the prosecutor.

A history of U.S. malevolent intervention

The United States has been intervening in Haiti since 1804, when President Thomas Jefferson applied this country's first sanctions against the country of Haiti, which had just declared itself free and abolished enslavement within its borders. The early foreign aid that George Washington gave to French enslavers to put down the Haitian revolution had failed.

From the mid 1950s to 1986, the U.S. acted to support the Duvalier regimes as a bulwark against the Cuban revolution. U.S. support continued even after the U.S. Air Force flew the deposed president of Haiti, Jean-Claude "Baby Doc" Duvalier, to the south of France in 1986.

Later Washington backed the two coups against Haitian President Jean Bertrand Aristide. Later still the U.S. threw its political muscle in getting Michel Martelly of the Haitian Party of Tèt Kole to become president in 2011, although Martelly had little popular support.

In a process that lasted over a year, Jovenel Moïse was maneuvered into the presidency in 2017 with firm U.S. backing. He ignored the requirements to organize parliamentary and local elections and refused to step down when his mandate expired.

When Moïse was assassinated in July, he and 10 senators were the only elected officials in the whole country, which he had been ruling by decree for months. The U.S. State Department had mildly chastised Moïse for failing to hold elections but exerted no significant pressure.

There was a general strike of fuel truck drivers and associated workers in the last week of October against the dangerous conditions the current lack of security imposes on drivers. There was no movement on the ransom demands of 17 kidnapped North American missionaries.

What Haiti really needs from U.S. workers is understanding, solidarity and a commitment to prevent further U.S. intervention. □

Another October uprising in Ecuador?

By Harí Villareal
Quito, Ecuador

The author's article appeared in revistacrisis.com Oct. 28. Villareal is a filmmaker and professor at the University of Quito. Translator Mike Otto from Workers World has added an introduction and interspersed comments in brackets that make the article more accessible to the North American reader.

Introduction: Today after less than six months in office, banker-President Guillermo Lasso must confront an uprising that began Oct. 26. The trigger that sparked resistance was the withdrawal of fuel subsidies, leading to rising costs of transport, inputs and supplies needed by the small farmers who provide most of the food consumed by the people of Ecuador.

The economy in recession is strangled by IMF-dictated austerity on top of huge public-sector layoffs that turned the COVID pandemic into a disaster. More than 100,000 workers have emigrated in search of overseas employment. Polls

register strong feelings of insecurity, fear, sadness and anger in the adult population.

Unemployment, growing poverty, crime on the streets and prisons out of control, with hundreds dead in rebellions continuing since February, all contribute to a sharp fall in support for the current government. Lasso's regime has failed to keep the promises his campaign made regarding employment.

The Pandora Papers scandal named Lasso as a participant in moving money to tax havens. This exposed Lasso as someone who serves only the rich, never governing in the interest of the people. Villareal's article follows:

Quito in the first day of resistance to neoliberalism

Oct. 28 — On Oct. 26, a progressive mobilization of the population to resist the government's neoliberal program began nationwide in Ecuador. The protest that spread throughout the country has generated much hope that the people will gradually consolidate enough power to build an effective anti-neoliberal



New uprising in Ecuador began Oct. 26. A sign reads 'The government of dialogue doesn't show its face.'

PHOTO: REVISTACRISIS

front, able to respond to the attacks of the [banker] Guillermo Lasso's regime.

[Neoliberalism commonly refers to free-market theories and policies that eliminate price controls, deregulate capital markets, lower trade barriers and reduce state regulation of the economy. Neoliberalism promotes privatization and austerity. In brief, it means using the government to increase the exploitation of the workers and farmers to benefit the few rich and the imperialist monopolies.]

Step-by-step and in a convincing manner, many sectors and social movements have been joining the call issued by the Plurinational Parliament of the Peoples. [The PPP is a coalition of more than 180 social organizations and labor unions that formed in response to the invitation of the Confederation of Ecuadorian Indigenous Nationalities (CONAIE) in the aftermath of the uprising of October 2019.]

In Quito, between 5,000 and 7,000 people from different organizations gathered at the Institute of Social Security,

raising the peoples' demands: Freeze fuel prices at \$1.50 and \$2.10 per gallon [depending on the type of fuel]; revise last year's bank loans for the agricultural sector; stop the privatizations; help small farmers deal with the relatively low prices for their produce [mitigate the high costs of agricultural inputs]; prior consultation with affected communities in areas of mining and oil exploitation; an end to conditions of precarious labor [overturn laws promoting labor "flexibilization"]; and specific public policies for women and the LGBT+ population.

On Oct. 27, mobilizations continued in the territories [the Amazon, the Andes and the coast] with multiple road closures in key provinces and mobilizations in major cities including Ambato, Cuenca, Loja, Otavalo, Manta and Guaranda, etc.

These first days constitute a starting point of the organized rejection of a self-perpetuating system under an Ecuadorian bourgeoisie, which for decades

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Demonstration last year against the neoliberal Ecuadorian government.

PHOTO: REVISTACRISIS

Biden submits to capital

The Joe Biden administration, having promised an elephant, is delivering a mouse.

So far Biden's "Build Back Better" bill is just talk, and what it promises dwindles day-by-day. Disappearing fastest are those programs that might have helped the working-class and poorer sectors of the population.

To understand this evolution, first look at how U.S. capitalism usually functions. First of all, the **capitalist state apparatus** — army, police, courts, prisons, corporate media — protects the property and interests of the 0.01% superrich, no matter who runs the White House or Congress. In addition, the multibillionaires control the **government** through the two major capitalist parties, Republicans and Democrats.

Does this mean the two parties are identical? No.

The now-Trumpite Republican Party, besides being the party of, by and for the superrich, has become the leading party of white supremacy, xenophobia and misogyny. It mobilizes all forms of bigotry. This makes the Trump Republicans especially dangerous to working-class solidarity.

The Democratic Party has a multinational membership and more support from oppressed members of the working class. Just like the Republicans, however, it promotes imperialist interests worldwide, waging war to impose them. It defends and imposes the rule of capital within the United States.

The Democratic Party sometimes proposes policies that reduce inequalities and injustices. It fears a social explosion.

The Democratic leadership, however, rarely fights for these positions when it confronts determined ruling-class obstruction. It wins social programs only when mass struggle accompanies the legislative program.

The main examples were Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal in the 1930s — accompanied by the unionization of the U.S. industrial working class. Lyndon Johnson's Great Society increased these concessions — under the pressure of the Black Liberation Movement in the late 1960s.

Crisis, confrontation, submission

The banking and real-estate crisis of 2008-09, rampant income inequality, the ongoing Climate Crisis and the COVID pandemic have exposed the fragility and instability of the capitalist system in the U.S., that system's most powerful center.

The original Build Back Better bill was supposed to take on these mammoth problems by rebuilding the infrastructure, providing jobs along with social benefits and increasing taxes on the superrich — a little.

Building the "hard infrastructure" — highways, bridges, railroads, water mains, etc. — aids the capitalist system. Even Republicans appeared to support this part of the program,



People demand a full program.

but without increasing taxes on the rich.

The social benefits, called the "soft infrastructure" — education, child care, health care, environment — also aid capitalism by muffling class conflict and developing the workforce. But the big capitalists and their political representatives hate making any concessions to the working class, especially to its poorest and most oppressed members.

From what was originally proposed, Biden has already given up points: Gone are free community college tuition, expanded Medicare, paid family and sick leave, new funding for housing and pre-K and child-care, subsidies for health care and expanded Medicaid and taxing the rich. All these are popular programs that would help all working-class people and which redress the inequalities that women and Black, Latinx, Indigenous, LGBTQ2S+, gender oppressed and disabled people disproportionately face.

The Republicans are united in obstructing programs that benefit 90% of the population. These programs would be widely popular ... if the Democratic leaders mobilized for them.

Joining the Republicans are two Democratic senators, Joe Manchin and Kyrsten Sinema, who are unashamedly backing big business. These two serve as a pretext for Biden and the Democratic leadership to concede, without a fight, every point that made their program popular with the working class.

The Democrats do this even though it risks losing the program and losing the election to the Trumpites.

While any mass mobilization fighting for the more progressive "soft infrastructure" is a worthwhile struggle, we draw the following conclusions:

The working class must mobilize and fight independently for its interests without depending in any way on Democratic Party leadership.

Any progressive program must serve the interests of the most oppressed as it aids the entire working class, uniting the whole class in struggle.

Recent examples of such effective, necessary mobilizations are the 2020 Black Lives Matter movement and the strike movement now picking up steam, along with workers organizing their workplaces and expanding unionization of all sectors of the class.

Support these developments! □

It's time to bury the 'chop'

Baseball — long touted as "America's National Pastime" — has just given millions of people around the world a horrifying look at the raw settler-colonial racism on which the U.S. is founded.

This year the National League champion Atlanta "Braves" played the American League champion Houston Astros in the "World Series." And what chauvinist arrogance is in that name — only U.S. baseball teams, with one Canadian exception, are allowed to compete!

This makes even more sickening the fact that during every game of the series played in Atlanta, the rest of the world has seen thousands of majority-white fans degrading Indigenous people by roaring a singsong "Indian war chant," while doing a "tomahawk chop" by bending their arms in rhythmic unison.

The "chop" has been a mainstay for these Atlanta baseball fans since 1991, when the team first made the national playoffs. Now the U.S. mass movement against racism has exerted so much pressure that major professional sports teams like the Washington Football Team and the Cleveland Guardians have had to rid themselves of racist names, mascots, paraphernalia and caricatures that mock Indigenous culture and life.

But the Atlanta team has dug in its heels, determined to carry on its racist tradition. The players actually still wear uniforms bearing a tomahawk logo.

Questioned about Atlanta team racism when this "World Series" began, Major League Baseball Commissioner Rob Manfred flatly denied there was a problem, giving the excuse that "some" Indigenous groups had no problem with the team.

The National Congress of American Indians immediately countered that Native American mascots and rituals such as the chop "have no place in American society." University of Michigan psychology professor Stephanie Fryberg emphasized that



Game 1 of the World Series in Houston's Minute Maid Park, Oct. 26.

this kind of racist behavior allows "people to play with another group's identity" with no regard for the dehumanizing and deadly consequences. (Washington Post, Oct. 28)

Aaron Payment, secretary of the National Congress of American Indians, pointed out that fans attend Braves games in red face and head-dresses, and opposing fans shout violent slurs based on offensive stereotypes.

Part of a history of genocide

White-supremacist violence can range far beyond the moment, reinforcing racist, reactionary policy decisions like the Trump-era decision to hand over protected Indigenous lands to energy-company exploitation.

Georgia itself — as well as the other states of the Deep South and Southwest — was originally built on Native lands stolen in order to establish plantations to grow cotton, rice and indigo and build an economy based on work done by kidnapped and enslaved African peoples.

With the 1830 Indian Removal Act, the U.S. government — reinforced by local white-settler militias founded to "fight Indians" — forcibly expelled over 60,000 members of the Cherokee, Muscogee (Creek), Seminole, Chickasaw and Choctaw nations from their ancestral homelands in what is now the U.S. South. Thousands died from exposure, starvation and sickness during the removal that came to be known as the "Trail of Tears."

But Indigenous people fought back. The 1830s Red Stick uprising by the Creek Nation was a militant defense of the people's communal lands and culture against the steadily encroaching economy based on enslavement.

The memory of that resistance is a searing rebuke to every white person who indulges in the mockery that is Atlanta's "chop and chant."

Indigenous people continue to resist. That is a reminder and a call for renewed fightback by all of us against white-supremacist exploitation.

The time is long, long past due for an accounting of U.S. war crimes against Indigenous peoples — for reparations, sovereignty and respect to be paid to the peoples whose lives, lands and cultures have been so viciously seized, attacked and exploited. The end of vile behavior at a baseball game and the abolition of racist team names and mascots is just the beginning of the thoroughgoing change that justice demands. □

Another October uprising in Ecuador?

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has imposed upon the people its demands for expansion, its guarantee of privileges and its class interests.

In the current historical moment, when neoliberalism is in full force, when imperialism reigns over the foreign debt and the militarization of the public space, the formation of a social fabric, with the ideological capacity to confront the assault against the people materialized in the shock doctrine, becomes urgent and fundamental.

The people need to be conscious and organized to be able to confront a state apparatus that unleashes all the violence of capitalism upon the masses. Neither neoliberalism nor the bourgeois state will be able to defeat a class-conscious people.

Long live the organized people!

Translator's afterword: The social explosion that occurred in October 2019 was sparked by a two-day nationwide strike of transporters and drivers after then-President Lenín Moreno announced an end to fuel subsidies. Because the cost of fuel is critical to the small farmers and especially the Indigenous peoples, they shut the country down for 11 days with road blocks.

The movement occupied government buildings in many towns, and the spontaneous invasion of tens of thousands of people from rural Indigenous communities turned the center of Quito into something resembling the 1871 Paris Commune. Residents of the capital city greeted and supported the demonstrators with open arms for a whole week until the uprising ended Oct. 13, 2019.

The central issue of the cost of fuel links the two October uprisings of then and now.

The current regime of Guillermo Lasso inherited the reins of a neoliberal state that was driven into the arms of the International Monetary Fund by then-President Lenín Moreno, who many consider the worst president in Ecuador's history.

Lasso supported Moreno's brutal repression of the 2019 October Uprising, which was part of a wave of popular resistance in Haiti and Latin America. Ecuadorian neoliberalism has its roots in the brutal exploitation of rural workers in the cacao and banana fields going back 100 years and more.

Mike Otto's article following the election of Lasso, "Ecuador election: Analysts debate why neoliberal banker won" was published in Workers World on May 4, 2021.

Without U.S. interference Nicaragua’s right to sovereignty, development

By Monica Moorehead
Managua, Nicaragua

The Central American country of Nicaragua will hold national elections Nov. 7. Already the U.S. bourgeois press, a mouthpiece for U.S. imperialism, has declared that the elections will be “unfair and undemocratic.” For example, the New York Times ran an article Oct. 7, entitled “Democracy, or Something Like It,” in which the first four paragraphs label democracy in Nicaragua as being a “facade.”

The article also holds Daniel Ortega, the current president of Nicaragua, responsible for disappearing or detaining any opposition candidates who are neither allies nor friends of the Sandinista government. The Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) was victorious in carrying out a grassroots revolution

in 1979 against the U.S.-backed fascist Somoza regime. The FSLN regained its governmental power in 2007, following an electoral defeat in 1990.

It is the height of hypocrisy that the U.S. would accuse any elections of being fraudulent after what happened in the 2020 presidential elections, when Donald Trump and his ilk did everything possible to steal Joe Biden’s victory by attempting to deny registered voters — especially if they were Black — the right to vote in Georgia, Pennsylvania, Arizona, Michigan and other states. It is also ironic that the U.S. deplores detentions of political opponents while having the highest prison population globally, 25% of the world’s incarcerated population, yet only 4.25% of the world’s population.

A U.S. delegation, organized by the Alliance for Global Justice and the Nicaragua Network, spent the week of

Oct. 3-10 visiting with governmental officials in Managua and Leon, who are responsible for developing many sectors of Nicaraguan society, including health, education, security, housing, autonomy, disaster response and more.

Despite an unsuccessful two-month, right-wing coup attempt in 2018 and being one of 39 countries under U.S. sanctions, Nicaragua continues to develop its mixed economy, with a large emphasis on self-sufficiency amongst the masses.

One of our delegation meetings included a discussion Oct. 4 in Managua with the Supreme Electoral Council. This



U.S. delegation meets Oct. 4 in Managua with Brenda Rocha and Cairo Amador, the president and vice president of the Supreme Electoral Council, seated second and third on right-hand side. Seated in front of them is Michael Campbell from the Nicaraguan Ministry on International Relations and the Caribbean.

body organizes national, municipal and local elections in this country of 6 million people. The electoral process was outlined to the delegation by Brenda Rocha and Cairo Amador, president and vice president of the SEC, respectively.

Rocha and Amador stated that the SEC’s role is to strengthen and defend the democratic process, create conditions for the people to defend their rights and to carry out elections based on the laws in the country’s constitution. They told us that about 68% of the electorate voted in the 2016 elections, in which the FSLN won 72% of the vote. Five other national parties ran for office, including for the National Assembly, that year. The minimum voting age is 16.

Defense of Nicaragua vs. U.S. hostility

Two days after this meeting, on Oct. 6 the delegation paid a visit to the U.S. Embassy to deliver a protest letter to Kevin Sullivan, the U.S. ambassador to Nicaragua. The letter, accepted by his office, reads in part, “We come to Nicaragua deeply concerned regarding U.S. policy toward the country. We represent social justice forces in the United States today. Our group and networks are part of a movement supportive of Nicaragua, with decades of deep-rooted ties to the country and its peaceful development.

“We have learned that more than 60% of the national budget of Nicaragua is used to meet the basic needs of the population, including free health care, education and infrastructure. Even with limited resources, the country has made dramatic gains in gender parity, health and nutrition status.

“Clearly a developing country of 6 million people is not an ‘an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States of America,’ despite such declared justification in proposing and passing both the Nica Action and the proposed RENACER Act. These laws represent extreme political weapons that directly target defenseless civilians and undermine the progress in development to date.

“Despite decades of hostility from different U.S. administrations, Nicaragua has continued to make progress in addressing the needs of its people. Every country has a right to peace, sovereignty and development [without] foreign interference. Nicaragua deserves the same. We urge respect for the democratic electoral process that will take place in Nicaragua on Nov. 7, 2021.”

The attention of the world will be on Nicaragua Nov. 7, especially on whether the U.S. attempts to intervene. U.S. activists plan to be in Nicaragua to show their solidarity with the electoral process there. □

Protest targets discrimination against Koreans living in Japan

A demonstration in front of the Japanese Consulate in New York City on Oct. 28, with drums, chants and tall banners in Korean and Japanese drew attention to the continued discrimination against the oppressed Korean nationality living within Japan.

Koreans were brought to imperial Japan as conscripted workers for the most dangerous jobs prior to World War II. They were literally enslaved labor. Hundreds of thousands of Korean and other Asian women were brought to Japanese military brothels for sexual slavery during the Asia Pacific War.

Under the decades of U.S. occupation since the end of World War II, the same oppressive class relations were maintained. The Korean people who remained in Japan after the war, due to the U.S. war in Korea and the blockade of North Korea, are still — three and four generations later — denied the full citizenship rights of others living in Japan.

In Japan, as in every one of the imperialist G7 countries today, oppressed nationalities do not have equal rights in education, housing or employment.

To maintain their national identity, language and culture, the oppressed Korean community at their own expense built and maintained a series of kindergartens, grade schools and high schools. The pressing need for computers and more modern technology makes this an increasingly difficult burden. Education is free and subsidized for all others in Japan,



including education in several other languages, but not for Korean schools.

The demonstration condemned these racist policies and violations of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It was organized by the 6-15 NY Committee for the Reunification of Korea and drew support from a number of antiwar and peace organizations.

— Report and photo by Sara Flounders

La lucha de clases mundial impulsa el bloqueo de la cadena de suministro

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conductores a condiciones de trabajo inseguras y poco recomendables, incluidas semanas laborales de 70 horas, y les paga salarios cada vez más reducidos. Esta situación se ha visto agravada por la pandemia de COVID-19. Muchos conductores están abandonando el sector en busca de mejores opciones. Esto es una realidad, tanto si un trabajador conduce un camión comercial como un autobús escolar, otro sector que se enfrenta a una grave escasez.

‘La escasez nacional más grave es la de los salarios dignos’

Los conductores de autobuses escolares de Boston, pertenecientes al Local 8751 de los Steelworkers, que cuenta con 1.000 miembros, exigen justicia para los conductores y desafían el mito de una

“escasez nacional de trabajadores que quisieran conducir trabajos de autobuses escolares bien pagados y seguros”. El líder del sindicato, Steve Gillis, dijo a Workers World: “Hay una gran escasez nacional de salarios dignos, beneficios, salud y seguridad, y respeto por los trabajadores del transporte escolar, icausada por las codiciosas corporaciones y sus gobiernos!”

“Los trabajadores están en huelga por sus derechos en todo el país en un número sin precedentes. Debemos demostrar nuestra unidad y solidaridad, hablando con una sola voz, haciendo saber a la empresa y a la ciudad que si no conseguimos nuestra justicia en la mesa de negociación, la conseguiremos en la línea de piquetes.”

Por primera vez en años, una gran parte de los trabajadores exigen mejores condiciones de trabajo y mayores salarios, y se niegan a trabajar hasta conseguirlos. La

crisis de la cadena de suministro mundial está mostrando el poder que tiene la clase obrera internacional para detener el sistema capitalista, parando toda la producción y, por tanto, todos los beneficios.

Los empresarios y los banqueros enmarcan la crisis actual como una “escasez de mano de obra”, mientras siguen practicando el capitalismo de casino, manipulando los precios de las acciones y los futuros para maximizar sus beneficios. Y hacen todo lo posible para impedir la sindicalización que mejoraría los salarios y las condiciones laborales de los trabajadores.

Pero sin los trabajadores de los buques de carga, de los muelles, de los camioneros, de los conductores de autobuses escolares y de los trabajadores de los almacenes, nada se mueve — eso es lo esencial de la clase obrera. □



La Unión de Campesinos en solidaridad con la huelga en John Deere.

La lucha de clases mundial impulsa el bloqueo de la cadena de suministro

Por Betsey Piette

El atasco mundial de la cadena de suministro sigue recibiendo la atención de los medios de comunicación corporativos, los directores generales más influyentes y los políticos. Afirman que les preocupa que la escasez de mercancías pueda provocar un aumento de los precios, impulsar la inflación y repercutir negativamente en los trabajadores, que ya tienen problemas económicos por los salarios históricamente bajos.

El 14 de octubre, el presidente Joe Biden pidió que dos puertos clave de California -Los Ángeles y Long Beach- se abrieran las 24 horas del día para descargar los contenedores del creciente número de buques de carga que esperan atracar. No se había secado la tinta del comunicado de prensa de Biden antes de que los críticos plantearan que las mercancías descargadas ya están esperando a los camiones, debido a la escasez de conductores disponibles.

Los camioneros dicen que sólo pueden transportar el contenido de un gran contenedor de carga por vehículo, y los almacenes a los que los llevan ya están llenos. En los almacenes, los jefes están llevando a los trabajadores a trabajar cada vez más rápido, haciendo que el trabajo sea peligroso y agotador. Estos trabajadores de los almacenes, incluidos millones en los gigantescos complejos de Amazon, se están organizando contra las condiciones de trabajo opresivas.

Si se resuelve el cuello de botella en el puerto, esto sólo empuja el cuello de botella más abajo en la cadena de suministro y en el proceso expone las relaciones contradictorias entre los jefes y los trabajadores en el centro del problema.

La cadena de suministro mundial comprende un enorme complejo de empresas y más de 3.000 millones de trabajadores que explotan. Y la pandemia del COVID-19 ha hecho que millones de trabajadores ya no estén dispuestos a arriesgar su salud y su seguridad en puestos de trabajo en los que los propietarios de las empresas se niegan a ofrecer salarios dignos y prestaciones para abordar la salud y la seguridad.

Alta tecnología y globalización

Los grandes capitalistas se aprovecharon de la revolución de la alta tecnología a principios de la década de 1980 y de los cambios políticos de la década de 1990: la contrarrevolución en la Unión Soviética y la apertura de la mano de obra de China al empleo y la explotación por parte de la industria internacional. (Véase “High Tech, Low Pay — “Alta tecnología, bajos salarios”, de Sam Marcy y “Low Wage Capitalism” — “Capitalismo de bajos salarios”, de Fred Goldstein).

En su afán por maximizar los beneficios, las corporaciones multinacionales empezaron a exportar aparatos de producción, trasladando fábricas enteras de un país a otro para encontrar dónde podían pagar a los trabajadores los salarios más bajos. Estas mismas corporaciones obligaron a los fabricantes de piezas a competir entre sí para ofrecer



Los camiones esperan para entrar en el puerto de Long Beach para recoger cargas, octubre de 2021.

las ofertas más bajas.

Las industrias minoristas emplearon inventarios “justo a tiempo” para reducir los gastos generales. Esta estrategia permitía a las corporaciones minimizar el almacenamiento de mercancías -su inventario- en almacenes o aparcamientos, pero exigía una entrega fluida de los productos fabricados. Enfrentados a la pandemia del COVID-19 y afectados por los grandes fenómenos meteorológicos debidos a la crisis climática, algunos analistas pro-capitalistas dicen ahora que aumentar los inventarios a niveles “just-in-case” podría ser más práctico.

Todas estas medidas de reducción de costo se emplearon en un contexto de crisis recurrente de sobreproducción mundial, que cada vez dejaba menos trabajadores empleados, mientras la brecha de ingresos entre los jefes de las empresas y los trabajadores crecía exponencialmente. Mucho antes de que se informara del COVID-19 a principios de 2020, el sistema capitalista estaba en crisis. La pandemia ha puesto de manifiesto estas desigualdades al crear el primer cuello de botella en la entrega de inventarios, en los puertos.

Trabajadores portuarios desafían la narrativa de la patronal

Los capitalistas afirman que no pueden encontrar suficientes personas para ocupar los puestos de trabajo disponibles en las industrias que transportan mercancías. Pero en una entrevista del 14 de octubre con Steve Zeltzer de Work Week, Trent Willis, presidente del Local 10 del International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) que representa a los trabajadores portuarios del área de la bahía de California, declaró: “Esta es una lucha para la clase trabajadora en este momento. Primero tenemos que desafiar la narrativa de los empleadores que dicen que no pueden encontrar suficiente gente para ocupar los puestos de trabajo, dando a entender que los trabajadores son perezosos”.

“Todos sabemos que los beneficios de la clase acomodada han aumentado drásticamente a lo largo de los años, mientras que los salarios de los trabajadores no han seguido el ritmo. El salario mínimo ha sido el mismo durante muchos años. La gente no puede permitirse vivir en este país si no gana salarios

y beneficios decentes. La pandemia del COVID-19 puso esto al descubierto, junto con otras condiciones que afectan a los trabajadores”.

Willis rebatió las afirmaciones de que los buques de carga no podían descargar en la Costa Oeste, señalando que no hay ningún retraso de buques de transporte en el Puerto de Oakland (que ya tiene una política de 24 horas al día). Preguntó por qué los transportistas marítimos se niegan a utilizar el noveno puerto más grande -San Francisco/Oakland- de EE.UU. para descargar, mientras que entre 70 y 80 buques hacen cola en los puertos de Los Ángeles y Long Beach.

Dijo Willis: “El respaldo de la cadena de suministro en la Costa Oeste se informa de forma inexacta en las principales cadenas de noticias. No hay refuerzos en la zona de la bahía, que incluye los puertos de San Francisco y Oakland. Pero, por alguna razón, los transportistas marítimos han decidido respaldar los barcos en el área de Los Ángeles, que maneja el 40% de los muelles de la Costa Oeste”.

El aburguesamiento del [San Francisco] Área de la Bahía, incluido el esfuerzo por privatizar la sección de la Terminal Howard del Puerto de Oakland para construir un nuevo estadio para el equipo de béisbol Oakland A's, se suma al problema. Willis señaló: “Los estibadores no pueden permitirse vivir en San Francisco y Oakland. Muchos tienen que conducir más de ciento kilómetros desde Sacramento para ir a trabajar, mientras se construyen condominios millonarios en Oakland y San Francisco.”

Ramón Ponce de León, presidente del Local 13 del ILWU, que representa a 5.000 estibadores, señaló en una entrevista del Día del Trabajo con Margaret Prescod, KPFFK, que más de 700 miembros habían contraído el COVID 19, y que al menos 13 habían muerto. Además de los primeros problemas para conseguir suficientes EPI para proteger a los miembros del sindicato, citó el aumento del comercio electrónico como un reto importante: “La gente ha duplicado su poder adquisitivo gracias al comercio electrónico. Pero nadie estaba preparado para la congestión que creó”.

Hay que señalar que cuando Biden respondió al atasco llegando a un acuerdo con el puerto de Los Ángeles para que operara las 24 horas del día, se extralimitó

Por primera vez en años, una gran parte de los trabajadores exigen mejores condiciones de trabajo y mayores salarios, y se niegan a trabajar hasta conseguirlos. La crisis de la cadena de suministro mundial está mostrando el poder que tiene la clase obrera internacional para detener el sistema capitalista, parando toda la producción y, por tanto, todos los beneficios.

en los contratos ya existentes entre los locales del ILWU y la patronal portuaria.

El mito de la escasez nacional de camioneros

El traslado de los contenedores de carga desde los puertos hasta los almacenes de venta al público depende de la mano de obra de casi 2 millones de camioneros en EE.UU. Chris Spear, presidente y director general de la American Trucking Associations, declaró a la CNN que el sector se enfrenta a una escasez de mano de obra récord de 80.000 conductores. Incluso antes de la pandemia del COVID-19, la industria afirmaba enfrentarse a una escasez de 61.500 conductores. Spear dijo que la industria necesitará formar a un millón de nuevos conductores en los próximos 10 años. (CNN, 19 de octubre)

Lo que el gran jefe Spears no abordó es por qué no hay más trabajadores que busquen empleo en el sector, que se enfrenta a una escasez de conductores por cuarto año consecutivo. Pero, ¿existe realmente una escasez de conductores cualificados? Y si es así, ¿por qué?

Antes de 1980, el conductor de camión sindicalizado medio ganaba más de 96.000 dólares en dólares de hoy, y producían más que eso en valor que los propietarios se llevaban como beneficios. En 1974, los miembros del sindicato Teamsters que representan a los camioneros eran más de 2 millones. Hoy hay menos de 75.000 conductores sindicados. El salario medio de los conductores es de unos 45.260 dólares, y el 40% carece de cobertura sanitaria.

¿Qué ha cambiado?

En 1980, bajo la presión de los bancos y las empresas, el presidente demócrata Jimmy Carter firmó la Ley de Transportistas, que inició el proceso de desregulación de la industria del transporte por carretera, abriéndola a la competencia despiadada. La Ley también modificó la normativa aplicada en 1935, que había fijado el precio para trasladar un producto de una ciudad a otra. La MCA permitía a cualquiera transportar cualquier mercancía, a cualquier lugar, por cualquier precio. (tinyurl.com/ttveeys)

En la actualidad, la industria del transporte por carretera somete a los

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